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SOME
ANIMADVERSIONS
ON THE
PAPER

Delivered to the

SHERIFFS,

On Friday December, the 7th 1683.

BY

Algernon Sidney, Esq;

Before he was Executed.

THE old *Sophisters* of the Rebellion, (since the discovery of the *Plot*;) have been wonderfully industrious in spreading many inconsistent rumors, that might, (if possible) have stifled, and discredited its Authority. That stupendous piece of Villany contriv'd by *Anti-monarchical, Atheistical Re-publicans*, is represented (to the unthinking Multitude) as an airy fantom, and illusion, a trick of State, and I know not what besides. These tricks and shams, our projective *Conspirators* imagin, will undoubtedly have a great influence on the tempers of the People, create doubts and jealousys and support the spirits of their Party, amidst so many wonderful disappointments. Their Design is yet deeper, they

would fain amuse the World, and harangue upon their Innocency; that they might more securely and more successfully go on in their *Resolv'd* attempts against the Government.

Not only the language of the *Living*, says, but the *Dead* speak, That the *Plot* is at an end, that the Innocence of the late Sufferers is so very conspicuous, that the *World* is strangely infatuated, if they credit the least part of this *Fanatick Conspiracy*. *Egregious sophisms!*

I am sorry to find that this *furor Fanaticus*, this impetuous, preposterous Zeal, should hurry Men, into these Acts of Imprudence, and self-justification, even in that minute which launches them into *Eternity*, brings them before a *Tribunal*, where there

there is no Corruption of Jury's, on one hand; Nor no hypocritical pretences and evasions on the other, that can excuse, or divert the deserved sentence.

I am concern'd likewise, that the *Faction* are Resolv'd, to defend themselves in all those manifest Acts of Rebellion, as it has been apparent in my Lord *Russel's* Case, and of this late unhappy Gentleman *Mr. Sidney*, who directly follows his steps in point of Justification.

I have a great respect for Truth, and Plain-Dealing; I shall therefore modestly comport my self within the decent Rules of sobriety and calmness; since I consider how I'me to reflect on the behaviour of the *Dead*, who (I know) are in no capacity to make a Vindication of their actions.

I shall not put the words of the Deceased Gentleman upon the Rack, to make them confess more than they would; But begin to Anatomize some particulars, which may be most pernicious in the consequence, if they are imbib'd for Truth, and receiv'd as Gospel, amongst the undigesting multitude. Passing by his *Apostolical Address* [*Men, Brethren, &c.*] and his excuse for not speaking freely, because of the cold Weather and the Infirmary of Old Age, and a close confinement, I shall consider his opinion of the present Age, which he says makes [*Truth pass for Treason.*] He would have notably stigmatiz'd it, but he was afraid the people wou'd not relish such Popular pieces of scandal. [Their ears wou'd be too tender to hear it.] This is a wonderful fit of squeamishness indeed, since he must needs know, that the *Defenders* of the **OLD CAUSE**, would have made great improvement of it. *Fortiter calumniari aliquid habebit.* [*West, Rumsey, and Keyling*, (he says) *knew him not, and others made use of his, and of Others Names to give Repu-*

tation to their designs; the Lord Howard, is an infamous Perjur'd Man, who drudg'd, and forswore himself in expectation of the promis'd Pardon.]

'Tis no wonder to hear Witnesses branded with such opprobrious Characters, since the persons concern'd, propose to themselves, that the disreputation of the Evidence is an argument of their Innocence, and that by making them *Reprobates*, they themselves should become Saints. 'Tis politrickly doped I confess, but the cheat can't pass upon all people. None but ill persons would engage in Conspiracy 'tis true; but the thing once detected, how is it possible the Principal Actors should be punished, unless their Brother Conspirators (tho *dipt in it* themselves as my Lord *Russel* has it) should give Evidence against them? All Treasons must of necessity be unpunishable, if such Witnesses are not allowed.

[*The stress of the matter* (he says) *lies in the Papers taken in his Closet by the Kings Officers, not prov'd to be his; but by the similitude of an hand which is to be easily counterfeited.*] By his leave, the matters were not wholly reduc'd to the Papers, tho those are bad enough by his own confession. A small Bill, or a compendious Letter may be counterfeited probably, and a person hastily perusing it may be deceiv'd; But a constant intercourse of Letters, and diligent observing, and comparing the Characters, destroys such a Cheat.

Mr. Sidney on his Tryal, denies himself to be the Author of those dangerous wicked Principles (as he calls *Filmers*) contain'd in his *Treatise*, yet here he frankly confesses the whole, and tells the World (without any hesitation, what his opinion and principles are; To refute which, it would take up a considerable time, which a short reflection upon this very Speech will not allow.

However

However I shall touch slightly upon it. He pretends his sheets were an Answer to Sir Robert Filmer's Patriarcha, and *challenges a Liberty to express his thoughts in opposition to Kingly Government*, which Sir Robert pleads for. His *Anti-monarchical Principles* are too too evident by all the actions of his Life; his opinion, or Article of his Creed, is this, [*I Believe that God hath left Nations unto the Liberty of setting up such Government as best pleased themselves.*] Without doubt Mr. Algernon was for the people's doing again what *seem'd right in their own Eyes*, and for having *no King in Israel*. Our Pseudo-Protestant and Jesuitical Casuist again tells ye, That *the Laws give Power to the Magistrate*. Woful experience informs us, what sacred Blood was spilt, upon Prosecuting this *Rebellious Topique*. See the Tryal of King Charles the First, and you'll find Bradshaw speak the very Language of our Colonel. The President tells his Majesty, *The Law is your Master, the Law is your Superiour, Debent ei ponere frenum. Rex est dum bene Regit*, and no longer, if the *Plenipotentiary's* the people please. Ifancy that 'tis equally possible to draw a parallel 'twixt the avowed principles of our discontented Statesman, and those of the Sophistical canting President, as 'twixt the *Covenant*, and *Association*. Mr. Sidney allows that the people make *Choice of their Governors*; if so, 'tis certain they can depose them *ad libitum*. For that which creates a power must of necessity be Superiour to that power it creates. What a silly business then is a King? (which is or really should be *Legibus solutus*, otherwise He can't be Supreme.) I say, What a trifle is a Crown, if it can be given and taken according to the giddy humor of a freakish Multitude? We may deny his suppositions likewise about his Election of Kings, which must be either by a unanimous Consent of a whole Nation; which is ridiculous :

For never was a publick, General Meeting of a whole Kingdom known for Election of a Prince; If there had been, one Dissenter would have taken away the Unanimity. If he talk't of the Major Part, or Chusing by Proxy, his Arguments will be found deficient likewise; But 'tis impossible to unravel all the particulars. He may talk of the King of France's modesty, and his boasting of the *happy want of Power*; yet the whole World knows how little he confines himself to these thin Cobwebs, the Laws, which he breaks at pleasure. Take then every Paragraph distinctly by its self, and you'll find abominable Principles couch't under it; which once believ'd, would be destructive of any Government whatsoever. Take it altogether, 'tis a virulent Reflection and Libel against this. *His Jury is pick't, who could not judg of the nature of such a Treasonable Pamphlet*: There were Persons of Understanding and Estates Return'd, but his exceptions were against them; thinking by his flashes of Rhetorick to win the others into an opinion of his Innocence.

But here comes the *Epitome* of scandal: [*I was long since told I must Die, or the Plot must Die.*] This is fine impeaching the Justice of the Nation; What! Does he make *Abingdon* Laws now in fashion? Hang a Man right or wrong. Sure no; He had all the favour in the World shown him, that a Person in his circumstances could expect, or desire.

But here observe Malice and Rancour mixt with Scandal: [*Left the means of destroying the best Protestants should fail, the Bench is fill'd with former blemishes of the Bar.*] Old Dogs never bite, but when they bite sure. Lord! What horrible Days of Persecution are these! the best

the best Protestants, *i. e.* Rebellious Dissenters are condemn'd like Dogs, by a parcel of Men, who sacrificed to the Idols of Mr. Williams's Chair. Alas! if he means so, their Memories (notwithstanding his detractions) will smell sweet, when the actions of a rash Tyrannical Club of Republicans, will stink down to Posterity.

I shall not fall to the dissection of some other matters, but tell you, That (without *Innuendo's*) all these dangerous Justifications (which are essential to our True-Protestants) are purely Design'd to Poyson the People, to animate them to a vigorous Prosecution of their beloved Plot; which by our Colonels Death will not dwindle into Air, but *live*, and be a scandal for ever to the Party, whom he espouses.

Now for the *spirit* of a Non-Con: [*Forgive these Praediss, and avert the Evils, &c.*] [*Suffer not Idolatry to be Establish'd in the Land.*] This is

much the same with my Lord Russell's: *I do believe Popery is coming into the Land.* This Bugbear is known by all of them, to be a successful business towards the Prosecution of their irreligious ends.

Lastly, Be astonish'd, Reader, at that sinful security wherein he prides himself. *Tantum Religio potuit suadere malorum!* Was ever a Villany so Patroniz'd as this **OLD CASE** in Capitals? See how he justifies the Rebellious actions of his *Tenth*, and makes Heaven to Vindicate 'em: As if the permission of God Almighty were an approbation; which is a very sinful inference.

In short, I wish all People would consult their own Interest, and not follow the footsteps of our late Resolute Rebels, who make Treason Meritorious. But if any have been withdrawn, and seduced; let them early Repent, that they may divert the like Fatal Sentence that is infallibly due to all Factious Conspirators.

L O N D O N :

Printed by G. C. for John Cox, at the *Blue-Ball* in *Thames-street*, over-against *Baynards-Castle.* 1683.